

ELLIPSIS AND JAPANESE VERBALS

by

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Kansasu ya  
Bashyoo no shira nu  
tooi kuni

kansasu ya  
Bashyoo mo shiranu  
tooi kuni

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ch, Kansas  
A distant land!  
Even Bashyoo, a great poet,  
did not know.  
Ch, Kansas  
A distant land!  
People here do not know  
anything about Bashyoo.

I am very lucky to have been here and to experience a different culture which even Bashyoo, a great poet, could not imagine.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to:

-- my major professor, Dr. James L. Armagost for his advice and guidance during my studies at K.S.U.

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## O. Introduction

This paper deals with the relationship between ellipsis and some features of Japanese verbals, which English verbals do not have, through the contrastive manner.

I have no intention of dealing with the ellipsis of various elements in Japanese discourse in detail, nor of shedding light on this phenomenon to build up a sort of discourse theory of ellipsis. In other words, it is not the purpose of this paper to explain why a certain element is omitted in a certain stage of a given discourse, and what kind of discourse rules make it possible. The matter of ellipsis has been investigated from this perspective, by many linguists. This is partly because ellipsis occurs in a discourse level as a pervasive phenomenon in Japanese, and therefore, it should be discussed in the arena of discourse. But it is mainly because they did not differentiate two aspects of ellipsis. Why a certain element is omitted and what is the configuration of the omitted element and why it is so in a given discourse should be differentiated from the question what brings about ellipsis. The latter question or the *raison d'être* of ellipsis has not been fully answered because of their failure in differentiation of the two aspects of ellipsis, or of their emphasis on the discourse analysis of ellipsis.

My main concern is to explain what is a real cause of ellipsis and to shed light on some syntactic features of Japanese verbals, which lead to explain the *raison d'être* of ellipsis.

## 1. Ellipsis

In "SHOGUN," which is a marvelous story of the Englishman Blackthorne, the Japanese lord Toranaga and medieval Japan, there is an interesting part in which some of the characteristics of the Japanese language are described (indicated by my underlining)<sup>1</sup>.

"To whom are you talking, Anjin-san?" she had asked. And then again he had felt his frustration rising. "It's all very difficult, Mariko-san."

"Ch, no, Anjin-san. Japanese is very simple to speak compared with other languages. There are no articles, no 'the,' 'a,' or 'an.' No verb conjugations or infinitives. All verbs are regular, ending in masu, and you can say almost everything by using the present tense only, if you want. For a question just add ka after the verb. For a negative just change masu to masen. What could be easier? Yukimasu means I go, but equally you, he, she, it, we, they go or will go, or even could have gone. Even plural and singular nouns are the same. Tsuma means wife, or wives. Very simple."

As one of the remarkable differences between English and Japanese, Mariko refers to "Ellipsis of the Japanese language" when she says, "Yukimasu means-----."

The correspondence between English and Japanese in the above example is diagrammed in (1).

	Japanese	English
(1)	Yukimasu	( I, You, He, She, They etc.) go or
	go	will go

Here a Japanese subject is omitted in surface structure, while in English a subject must be specified except in imperative sentences.

It is necessary to define the term 'ellipsis' to avoid various confusions so that we can proceed smoothly.

I use the term 'ellipsis' to refer to a pervasive omission of various elements in surface structure, or in a discourse level. Omission of NPs, Auxiliaries, and particles in the process of producing a surface structure from its underlying structure, is not included in the concept 'ellipsis' under the present discussion. These omissions should be differentiated either as 'deletion', or 'deep ellipsis'.<sup>2</sup>

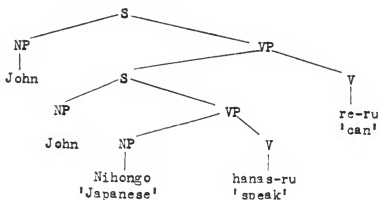
As Hinds (1978:19) adequately pointed out, 'ellipsis' is a theoretically independent notion, and 'deletion' is a theoretically dependent notion in the sense that the latter is the result of various transformations to produce a grammatical sentence from its deep structure.

For example, Sentence (2) is derived from the following deep structure through the steps given in (4).<sup>3</sup>

(2) John ga Nihongo ga hanaseru.

John can speak English.

(3) Deep Structure



(4)

- a. Deep structure: (John) ( (John Nihongo hanas-ru) re-ru)  
NP S VP
- b. First cycle
- (i) Subject Marking: (John)(John ga Nihongo hanas-ru)  
re-ru S
- (ii) Object Marking: (John)(John ga Nihongo o hanas-ru)  
re-ru S
- c. Second cycle
- (i) Equi-NP Deletion: (John)(∅ Nihongo o hanas-ru) re-ru  
S
- (ii) Aux Deletion: (John)(Nihongo o hanas-∅) re-ru  
S
- (iii) Verb Raising: (John)(Nihongo o) hanas-re-ru
- (iv) Subject Marking: John ga Nihongo o hanas-re-ru
- (v) Object Marking: John ga Nihongo o ga hanas-re-ru
- (vi) Ga/O Deletion: John ga Nihongo ∅ ga hanas-re-ru

As shown in (4), Equi-NP deletion, Aux deletion and Ga/O deletion or particle deletion are applied to the underlying structure as obligatory transformations, resulting in the surface structure of (2) John ga Nihongo ga hanaseru.

Ellipsis, on the other hand, is applied to the surface structure.

Compare the following sentences.

- (2) John ga Nihongo ga hanas-re-ru.  
Japanese speak can  
John can speak Japanese.
- (5) John ga hanas-re-ru. (John can speak  $\emptyset$ )
- (6) Nihongo ga hanas-re-ru. ( $\emptyset$  can speak Japanese)
- (7) hanas-re-ru. ( $\emptyset$  can speak  $\emptyset$ )
- (8) John ga Nihongo ga ne. (John  $\emptyset$  Japanese you know/I see)
- (9) John Nihongo hanas-re-ru. (John $\emptyset$  can speak Japanese $\emptyset$ )

Various elements are omitted in (5) through (9). We can not find an object in (5), nor a subject in (6). Both the subject and the object are omitted in (7).

We can call these omissions 'Nominal ellipsis' as noun phrases are omitted. We can see the omission of the verb in (8). This can be referred to as 'Verbal ellipsis'. In (9) there are no particles ('Particle ellipsis').

Sentences (5) through (9) might seem strange and awkward to Blackthorne or other foreigners, but they are perfectly grammatical and natural to native speakers of Japanese. In a given situation of discourse, Japanese people do not have any difficulty at all in understanding them, and in deducing a complete surface structure (2) from them.

It may be quite natural and reasonable to investigate this pervasive phenomenon of ellipsis on the ground of discourse as ellipsis occurs as a surface structure notion in a given discourse. If we confine our interests and investigations to an elliptical sentence alone without regard to its relation to other sentences in the discourse, it seems improbable that we will bear a fruitful result. Neither (1) Yukimasu (go) nor (8) John ga Nihongo ga ne (John Japanese you know) gives any information on omitted material in the respective sentences, except that the omitted elements are a subject in (1), and a verb in (8). They must be investigated in a given discourse. In this sense Japanese discourse analysis of ellipsis is inevitable and of vital importance.

It is indeed by discourse analysis that we are able to find out what is omitted, what the configuration of ellipsis is, and what brings about this configuration in a given discourse.



However, if a question is asked about what makes ellipsis possible in general, the answer to that question does not seem to be in the discourse level. And my main concern in this paper is to give a solution to this problem.

Now let's examine these two short conversations.<sup>4</sup>

- (10) a. A: Did John try to find a piano?  
B: Yes, but he could not find one.
- b. A: Did John try to lift a piano?  
B: Yes, but he could not lift it.
- (11) a. A: John wa piano o mitukeyoo-to-shita-no.  
John piano tried to find?  
B: eeh, demo mituke-rare-nakat-ta-yo.  
yes but find can not past.
- b. A: John wa piano o mochiageyoo-to-shita-no.  
John piano tried to lift?  
B: eeh, demo mochiage-rare-nakat-ta-yo.  
Yes but lift can not past.

In the English conversations, both (10) a. and (10) b., John is referred to as he. In (10) a. a piano is referred to as one, but in (10) b. a piano is referred to as it. The NP a piano in (10) a. is naturally understood nonspecifically, that is, as meaning 'any piano', while the same noun phrase in (10) b. suggests the interpretation 'a certain piano'. It is something about the verb lift that suggests that a piano describes some specific object. On the other hand, (10) b. is easily understood to inform us only about the kind of object John was trying to find.

In Japanese, both John and a piano are omitted (Lock at (11) a. B: and b. B:.).

This difference between English and Japanese is represented in (12).

(12)

	English (10) a.	Japanese (11) a.
John	→ he	→ $\phi$
Piano	→ one	→ $\phi$
	(10) b.	(11) b.
John	→ he	→ $\phi$
Piano	→ it	→ $\phi$

In English John, as it is established as a discourse referent, is pronominalized as he. Whether a specific NP a piano is established or not is shown by the difference between it and one. In Japanese, these are equally omitted. But this does not mean that the Japanese language lacks a way to distinguish noun phrases which are established as discourse referents from those which are not.

In (11) a. *mituke-rare-nakat-ta-yo* (could not find) is realized as a complete sentence if ellipsis does not occur.

- (13) kare wa<sup>5</sup> ichidai mo *mituke-rare-nakat-ta-yo*.  
 he one could not find  
 he could not find one.

*Mochiage-rare-nakat-ta-yo* in (11) b. is,

- (14) kare wa sore o *mochiage-rare-nakat-ta-yo*  
 he it could not lift  
 he could not lift it.

As shown above, whether a noun phrase is established as a discourse referent or not, is clearly indicated by kare (he), ichidai (one), and sore (it) respectively in the complete surface sentences.

(12) is, therefore, revised as follows.

(15)

	English	Japanese	Japanese (complete form)
	(10) a.	(11) a.	
John	→ he	→ <u>o</u>	→ <u>kare</u> (he)
Piano	→ one	→ <u>o</u>	→ <u>ich-dai</u> (one)
	(10) b.	(11) b.	
John	→ he	→ <u>o</u>	→ <u>kare</u> (he)
Piano	→ it	→ <u>o</u>	→ <u>sore</u> (it)

Roughly speaking, both in English and in Japanese, noun phrases are dealt with in the same manner as far as the matter of discourse referents is concerned. The difference is that in Japanese, these noun phrases can be omitted in various ways, but in English such omission is not allowed.<sup>6</sup> For English, omission of these noun phrases will result in ungrammatical sentences such as he could not find, could not find it, and could not find.<sup>7</sup> Why is this so?

It goes without saying that some aspects of these omissions must be studied in the arena of Japanese discourse. However, as long as we have the premises mentioned above, namely that both English and Japanese may deal with noun phrases in a similar manner in the respective discourses, it is worth trying to investigate somewhere else to answer why.

In other words, a cause of ellipsis should be sought in a place where we can entertain the possibility of the occurrence of ellipsis on one hand (namely in Japanese), and the impossibility of its occurrence on the other hand (namely in English). Concretely speaking, we have to explain the reason why ellipsis of the noun phrases is possible in the above Japanese examples and it not allowed in the English ones.

Then where should we investigate for the solution of this matter? First of all, it is quite clear that we must deal with this problem in the contrastive perspective. For it is a cross-linguistic problem in a sense that Japanese allows ellipsis, but English doesn't. In addition, we are not going to deal with various configurations of ellipsis, but with the *raison d'être* of ellipsis itself. The various configurations of ellipsis will be explained in a discourse level once ellipsis itself is explained.

Second, if not in a discourse level, we will naturally come down to the sentence level. By sentence level, I mean a surface structure which is derived from its underlying structure (I will refer to it as semantic deep later) by various transformations. It is probably in this arena that we can explain why ellipsis occurs in Japanese and why it is not allowed in English. In this arena English and Japanese can be shown as syntactically different systems, and at the present moment this syntactic difference seems to be correspondent to the difference in possibility for ellipsis.

Now I will summarize what I have mentioned so far. Ellipsis is a theoretically independent notion in a surface level or in a discourse level. Deletion on the other hand, is a theoretically dependent notion which can be referred to as a transformation. Though it is theoretically independent, ellipsis may be investigated in the sentence level rather than in the discourse level, in order to explain what brings it about. This investigation must be in the contrastive perspective.

## 2. Canonical Surface Structure Patterns and Frame Theory

In section 1, I argued the importance of contrastive study in the sentence level to answer the question why ellipsis is possible or not. Hinds (1978) seems to take a similar method in his approach to this matter.

He resorts to canonical surface structure patterns and frame theory as his theoretical backgrounds. To constitute a complete sentence in Japanese, specific noun phrases (NP) and accompanying post positional particles are considered necessary.<sup>8</sup> In this sense, a Japanese sentence tends to form a pattern in its surface structure. Hinds specifies these three basic patterns.

- (16)
- I NP ga; o VB (transitive)
  - II NP ni; NP ga VB (ergative)
  - III NP ga VB (intransitive)

At this point, Hinds attempts a definition of ellipsis in Japanese.

Ellipsis occurs when an element in the canonical surface structure pattern is omitted. One of three types of elements may be omitted: a verbal may be omitted, a noun phrase (with its accompanying particle) may be omitted, or a postpositional particle may be omitted (p.17).

Ellipsis is a surface structure notion, and it operates on the assumption that native speakers of Japanese have a feeling for canonical sentence patterns (p. 19).

Hinds then enriches the canonical surface structure patterns by introducing frame theory. Frame theory, as he mentions, advocates an approach similar to case theory as developed by Fillmore (1968) or Chafe (1970).

A proposition, roughly an action or state, forms the locus of the sentence. Concepts, roughly noun phrases, are connected to propositions in a limited number of clearly defined case relationships. These noun phrases are the 'terminals', and the conditions on the assignment of each are specified (by 'markers') vis-a-vis the proposition to which the noun phrases are attached (p.21).

Thus a verbal such as yomu 'read', being transitive, is given pattern (17) by the notion of the canonical surface structure patterns.

(17) yomu 'read'----->NP ga NP o yomu

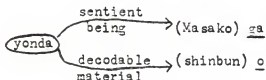
Then by the application of frame theory, the conditions of NP ga and NP o are that NP ga must be a sentient being, and that NP o must be a decodable material. (17) is illustrated as follows.

(18)  $\left[ \begin{array}{cc} \text{NP } \underline{ga} & \text{NP } \underline{o} \\ \text{sentient} & \text{decodable} \\ \text{being} & \text{material} \end{array} \right] \underline{yomu} \text{ 'read'}$

The top line within the brackets indicates the 'terminals' and the bottom line the 'markers'. The postpositional particles specify what grammatical role the noun phrases play, while the lower line descriptions specify what cognitive conditions are placed on the grammatical category (p. 21-22).

Hinds represents these relationships of (18) as (19), using a format originally introduced in Norman et al (1975:22ff) and modified by him for Japanese.

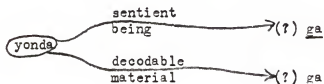
(19) Masako ga shinbun o yonda. (Masako read the newspaper.)  
 newspaper read



Thus Hinds arrives at his conclusion.

The relevance of this type of analysis for the notion of ellipsis is that we can understand quite clearly what happens when a speaker of Japanese is confronted with an elliptical sentence like yonda yo '(someone) read (something), you know'. When he hears this type of utterance, he associates the verbal with its obligatory case frame. This obligatory case frame provides a signal to the addressee to search his memory for an appropriate sentient being and appropriate decodable material. This is represented in (11) (my 20-SY), where question marks indicate the necessity of initiating a memory search for appropriate referents (p. 23).

(20) yonda yo  
(someone) read (something), you know.



Hinds compares the above translations with English pronominal usage.

English pronominal usage is a signal for the initiation of a memory search. The difference between this and Japanese ellipsis is that English pronouns are overt markers for this search to be undertaken and Japanese ellipsis is a covert signal initiated by means of the obligatory case frames associated with every verbal in the language (p. 23).

Hinds' theoretical approach based on the format or the obligatory case frame is very successful in the analysis of ellipsis in discourse level. However, his format (the application of canonical surface structure and frame theory to the analysis of ellipsis) seems to be less effective in solving the question I have raised in section 1. The question why ellipsis is possible in Japanese and why it is not allowed in English, is not likely to be answered fully in Hinds' theory.

Let's take a few more examples given by Hinds and compare them with the corresponding English verbals.

- (21)
- |    |  |   |                                      |  |   |            |
|----|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|------------|
| a. | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{ga} \\ \text{sentient} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$ | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{o} \\ \text{abstract} \\ \text{concept} \end{array} \right]$   | $\underline{siru}$ 'know'            | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{subj.}) \\ \text{sentient} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$ | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{obj.}) \\ \text{abstract} \\ \text{concept} \end{array} \right]$   | know       |
| b. | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{ga} \\ \text{sentient} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$ | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{o} \\ \text{abstract} \\ \text{concept} \end{array} \right]$   | $\underline{wakaru}$<br>'understand' | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{subj.}) \\ \text{sentient} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$ | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{obj.}) \\ \text{abstract} \\ \text{concept} \end{array} \right]$   | understand |
| c. | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{ga} \\ \text{animate} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$  | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP } \underline{o} \\ \text{material} \\ \text{which may} \\ \text{be ingest-} \\ \text{ed without} \\ \text{chewing} \end{array} \right]$ | $\underline{nomu}$<br>'drink'        | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{subj.}) \\ \text{animate} \\ \text{being} \end{array} \right]$  | $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{NP}(\text{obj.}) \\ \text{material} \\ \text{which may} \\ \text{be ingest-} \\ \text{ed without} \\ \text{chewing} \end{array} \right]$ | drink      |

We can not find any difference between these two kinds of formats, except for the fact that in Japanese postpositional particles appear after NP, ga functioning as a subject marker and o as an object marker, while in English neither NP as a subject nor NP as an object has these particles.

When Hinds (1978:19) says that native speakers of Japanese have a feeling for canonical sentence patterns, he merely suggests that noun phrases accompany postpositional particles which signal their grammatical relations, and that native speakers of Japanese have a feeling for associating these particles with grammatical functions.



And can't we say that native speakers of English have canonical sentence patterns like S + V, S + V + O, S + V + I.O + D.O, and that they have a feeling for these patterns?

The difference is that in English, as there are no postpositional particles, the positions which noun phrases take in a linear order of a sentence become decisive in subject or object making. Therefore canonical surface structure patterns fail to explain what makes Ellipsis possible.

As shown in (21), Hinds' frame theory does not suggest any significant difference which lies between English and Japanese, and in this sense, there seems to be a limitation in his theory. This is partly because his main interest lies in the configuration of ellipsis in a discourse, and partly because he does not differentiate two aspects of the problem of ellipsis, namely the pervasive phenomenon of ellipsis and the *raison d'être* of ellipsis. In order to investigate the *raison d'être* of ellipsis in Japanese, we must make a step forward.

### 3. Verbal Correspondence between English and Japanese

In the former section I have investigated Hinds' theory of ellipsis, and made it clear that his format is in the right perspective in Japanese discourse. However, in the contrastive perspective, he fails to show why ellipsis is allowed in Japanese, but not in English. As shown in (21), his examples do not indicate any particular restraints or conditions which would prevent the occurrence of ellipsis in English.

As long as we persist in his examples, we can not explain the fact that English does not allow a covert signal for the initiation of a memory search as Japanese does. In other words, if we show some other examples of English verbals, which prevent native speakers of English from having a clear format, we can say that the existence of these verbals makes it difficult to have an ellipted element in sentences with them. For without having a clear format, it is impossible to reconstruct a complete sentence, as an ellipted element remains unsolved through a memory search. And if these verbals are widely admitted in the English language, we can safely conclude that the pervasive existence of such verbals is the real restraint and condition which prevents ellipsis and makes it ungrammatical. In addition, through the contrastive study of verbals between English and Japanese, we will be able to specify some features of Japanese verbals which allow native speakers of Japanese to have a clear format, and make it possible for a Japanese sentence to have a covert signal in the form of ellipsis. In short it may be these features of Japanese verbals which make the phenomenon of ellipsis possible in the Japanese discourse.

In discussing verbals in the contrastive manner, I will use the idea of 'semantic deep' or 'case grammar' which has been developed

mainly by Fillmore and Chafe. Chafe (1970) describes his theoretical stance as follows.

My assumption will be that the total human conceptual universe is dichotomized initially into two major areas. One, the area of the verb, embraces states (conditions, and qualities) and events; the other, the area of the noun, embraces "things" (both physical objects and reified abstractions). Of these two, the verb will be assumed to be central and the noun peripheral (p.96).

(Numerous examples) apparently show that the semantic influence of the verb is dominant, extending itself over the subservient accompanying nouns (p. 97)

The following basic semantic configurations are given by Chafe.<sup>9</sup>

(22)

- a.  $\begin{array}{c} \text{V} \quad \text{pat} \\ \text{state} \quad \text{N} \end{array}$       The wood is dry.
- b.  $\begin{array}{c} \text{V} \quad \text{pat} \\ \text{process} \quad \text{N} \end{array}$       The wood dried.
- c.  $\begin{array}{c} \text{V} \quad \text{agt} \\ \text{action} \quad \text{N} \end{array}$       Harriet sang.
- d.  $\begin{array}{c} \text{V} \quad \text{pat} \quad \text{agt} \\ \text{process} \quad \text{N} \quad \text{N} \\ \text{action} \end{array}$       Michael dried the wood.

Verbals which describe a certain state or condition (dry, tight, broken, dead, etc.) are specified as state V. Verbals which deal with processes are specified as process V. Verbals which express an activity or action

are specified as action V. Verbals which express both a process and action are referred to as process action V. A noun which is in a certain state or condition, or is said to have changed its state or condition, is specified as a patient. A noun which performs the action can be said to be an agent. As other relations which a noun may bear to a verbal, there are instrument, beneficiary, experiencer, complement, location, time, etc.<sup>10</sup>

I believe this semantic approach which emphasizes the vital importance of verbals is theoretically rational and persuasive, especially when it comes to discussing the difference of verbals between English and Japanese. The phenomenon of ellipsis in Japanese discourse also supports the claim that the semantic approach is in the right perspective in the sense that ellipsis corresponds to the fact that the verbal is dominant. And in the contrastive study of English and Japanese, where we have to deal with the very different syntactic configurations, by and large the semantic approach seems to be the most adequate.

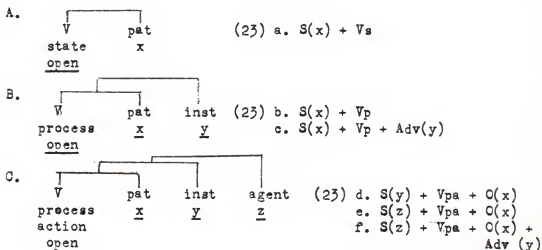
Let's take a look at the following sentences.

(23)

- a. The door is open.  
x
- b. The door opened.  
x
- c. The door opened with a key.  
x y
- d. The key opened the door.  
y x
- e. He opened the door.  
z x
- f. He opened the door with a key.  
z x y

In the above sentences, the verbal open functions as a stative V (a.), a process V (b. & c.), and a process action V (d., e., & f.). Noun phrases, x, y, and z have relations to the verbal as Patient, Instrument, and Agent respectively. The relations between semantic configurations and surface structures are represented in (24).

(24)



x = door      y = key      z = he

S = subject      O = object      Adv = Adverb  
Vs = state V      Vp = process V      Vpa = process action V

Japanese sentences which correspond to the English ones are shown in (25).

(25)

- a.  $\frac{doa}{x}$  ga aitei- ru.  
 SM be open PreP  
 door  
 (the door is open)
- b.  $\frac{doa}{x}$  ga ak- ta.  
 SM open PaP  
 (the door opened)
- c.  $\frac{doa}{x}$  ga  $\frac{kagi}{y}$  de ak- ta.  
 SM P open PaP  
 key  
 (the door opened with a key)
- d.\*  $\frac{kagi}{y}$  ga  $\frac{doa}{x}$  o ake- ta.  
 SM CM open PaP  
 (the key opened the door)
- e.  $\frac{kare}{z}$  ga  $\frac{doa}{x}$  o ake- ta.  
 SM CM open PaP  
 he  
 (he opened the door)
- f.  $\frac{kare}{z}$  ga  $\frac{kagi}{y}$  de  $\frac{doa}{x}$  o ake- ta.  
 SM P CM open PaP  
 (he opened the door with a key)

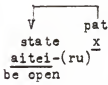
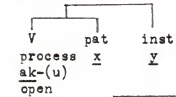
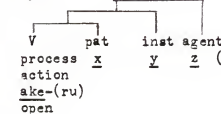
SM = subject marker  
 CM = object marker  
 PreP = present tense particle  
 PaP = past tense particle  
 P = particle

(25) d. *kagi ga doa o aketa* (the key opened the door) is unacceptable to native speakers of Japanese. Only under a personification interpretation, is this sentence acceptable. This sentence is similar to Fillmore's example, \*A hammer broke the glass with a chisel in the degree of unacceptability (Fillmore 1968:22).

The relations between semantic configurations and surface structures

are,

(26)

- A.  (25) a.  $S(x) + V_s$
- B.  (25) b.  $S(x) + V_p$   
c.  $S(x) + Adv(y) + \bar{V}_p$
- C.  (25) e.  $S(z) + C(x) + V_{pa}$   
f.  $S(z) + Adv(y) + C(x) + V_{pa}$

x = dea (door)  
y = kagi (key)  
z = kare (he)

The correspondence between English and Japanese both in the verbal forms and the surface structures is represented in (27).

(27)	English	Japanese
A.	(24)a. S(x) + Vs	(26)a. S(x) + Vs
B.	(24)b. S(x) + Vp c. S(x) + Vp + Adv(y)	(26)b. S(x) + Vp c. S(x) + Adv(y) + Vp
C.	(24)d. S(y) + Vpa + O(x) e. S(z) + Vpa + C(x) f. S(z) + Vpa + C(x) + Adv(y)	(26)e. S(z) + C(x) + Vpa f. S(z) + Adv(y) + C(x) + Vpa
	state (be)      open	——— aitei-ru
	verbal	
	process	
	verbal      open	——— ak-u
	process	
	action	
	verbal      open	——— ake-ru
	-ru & -u = present tense marker	

Two things will become clear through contrasting Japanese and English in (27).

- (28) The Japanese process action verbal does not take an instrument as a subject, while the English process action verbal does.

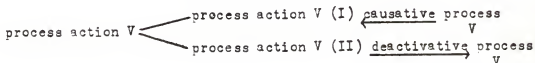
- (29) The English verbal open functions as state, process, or process action V in the surface structure, but in Japanese these different functions are realized as three different morphological forms.

state V	}	<u>open</u>	state V	———	aitei-ru
process V			process V	———	ak-u
process			process	———	
action V			action V	———	ake-ru



Process action verbals, according to Chafe (1970:133), are divided into two kinds. One is those which are derived from process verbals by a causative operation, and the other is those which are intrinsically action process and can be changed to process verbals by a deactivative operation. These relations can be represented as below.<sup>11</sup>

(30)



(I) → melt, open, kill, drop, break, etc.

(II) → kick, lift, cut, etc.

Process action verbals (I) are equivalent to what is called, 'Causative Verbs'.<sup>12</sup> In traditional grammar, both of them are classified as transitive verbs.

As the above diagram shows, these verbals occur both transitively and intransitively in English. That is to say, if they are used as process verbals, they are intransitive, and when they are used as process action verbals, they are transitive.

Let's examine these sentences.

(31)

- A. a. Tom cut the rope with a knife.  
 b. The boy broke the window with a bat.  
 c. John killed the victim with poison.  
 d. Jill stopped the engine with a key.  
 e. He kicked the ball with his left foot.  
 f. He lifted the rock with the machine.

- B. a. The knife cut the rope.  
 b. The bat broke the window.  
 c. The poison killed the victim.  
 d. The key stopped the engine.  
 e. His left foot kicked the ball.  
 f. The machine lifted the rock.
- C. a. The rope cut with a knife.  
 b. The window broke with a bat.  
 c. \*The victim killed with poison.<sup>13</sup>  
 d. The engine stopped with a key.  
 e. The ball kicked with his left foot.  
 f. The rock lifted with the machine.

In A., process action verbals take agents as subjects. We can find the same sentence structures in Japanese. However, the B. sentences are ungrammatical in Japanese (refer to (2<sup>o</sup>)). Native speakers of Japanese will revise these as C. without hesitation. And in doing so, they will change the verbal forms from transitive to intransitive.<sup>14</sup>

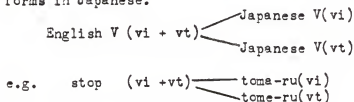
(32)

	transitive form		intransitive form
cut	— <u>ki-ru</u> —————>		<u>kire-ru</u>
break	— <u>kowasu</u> —————>		<u>koware-ru</u>
kick	— <u>ke-ru</u> —————>		<u>kere-ru</u>
stop	— <u>tomeru</u> —————>		<u>toma-ru</u>
drop	— <u>otosu</u> —————>		<u>oti-ru</u>
kill	— <u>korosu</u> —————>		<u>shinu</u> (die)
bend	— <u>mageru</u> —————>		<u>maza-ru</u>
grow	— <u>sodateru</u> —————>		<u>sodat-ru</u>
mix	— <u>mazeru</u> —————>		<u>maza-ru</u>
lift	— <u>motiageru</u> —————>		<u>motiageru</u> etc.

Now we can paraphrase (28) and (29) with more familiar traditional terminology, which is associated with surface structure.

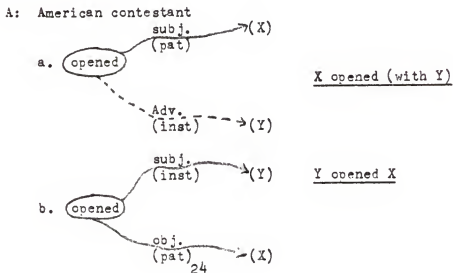
(33) English transitive verbs (or verbals) can take an instrument as subject, while Japanese transitive verbs can not.

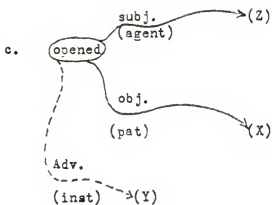
(34) The English verbs which occur both transitively and intransitively correspond to two different morphological forms in Japanese. There are very few that act both ways without changing their forms in Japanese.



Here let's bring back the idea of 'format' as suggested by Hinds, and suppose that two contestants, Japanese and American, are at a game show such as 'Match Game'. Each of them is given a card where a single verbal, let's say opened and ake-ta (or ai-ta) respectively, is written. Initiated by these verbals, sentence structures which will come to their minds on the spot might be as follows.

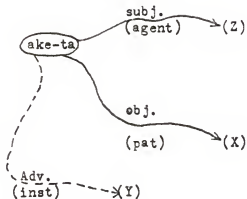
(35)





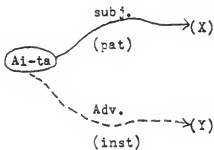
Z opened X (with Y)

B: Japanese contestant



Z ga (Y de) X o ake-ta

If ai-ta is given instead of ake-ta:



X ga (Y de) ai-ta

----- means optional.

For the given verbal, there exist three possibilities of constructing a surface structure in the mind of the American contestant, but in the mind of the Japanese speaker, there is only one structure to be formed, dependent on the form of the verbal. This significant difference between English and Japanese is no other than the result of features given in (33) and (34). These features, therefore, must be analyzed more carefully and deeply as they are associated with the pervasive phenomenon of ellipsis in Japanese.

#### 4. Animate Subject vs. Inanimate Subject

In section 3, it became clear that the English transitive verbal (I will use 'verbal' instead of 'verb' from now on) can take an instrument as subject, while the Japanese transitive verbal can not.

In this section I will investigate transitive sentence patterns, providing English examples and contrasting them with corresponding Japanese sentence structures. By 'transitive sentence patterns' I mean Subj. + Vt. + Obj. surface structure in English.

Transitive verbals here include not only process action verbals, which we discussed as transitive in section 3, but also state, process, and action verbals, which have a transitive surface structure. I will also discuss so-called 'causative' sentences here.

The following characteristic of Japanese transitive verbals will be specified through this section:

Japanese transitive verbals do not take inanimate beings as subjects. Not only instrument but also location, time, cause, and other concepts do not appear as a subject in most cases.<sup>15</sup> Subjects in Japanese transitive sentences are animate beings. They are featured as agent, experiencer, and beneficiary. Therefore, (33) will be revised through the discussion in this section. It is represented as (36).

(36)

Subjects of Japanese transitive verbals	—————→	+ Animate (Agent, Experience, Beneficiary)
---	--------	--

First, let's examine causative sentences briefly. English has two types of causative sentences, one with auxiliary causative verbs such as cause, make, etc., and the other with morphologically irregular causative verbs. Japanese causative forms may be also classified into two types in a similar way. The regular type involves the suffix- sase, which has a phonological variant form ase. This corresponds to the English causative with auxiliary causative verbs. We will deal with this kind of causative sentence here as we have already examined the other kind as process action verbals (I) in the former section.

The difference in this type of causative sentence between English and Japanese is that English takes inanimate subjects, but Japanese doesn't. Japanese causative sentences take only animate beings as subjects.

Let's take a look at these sentences.<sup>16</sup>

- (37) A. a. Taro made Hanako sad.  
b. Taro made Hanako happy.

c. He made the children run all at once.

d. He made the children take a detour.

B. a. Taro's forgetting to buy a present made Hanako sad.

b. Taro's success made Hanako happy.

c. The sound of the gun made the children run all at once.

d. The presence of the man made the children take a detour.

In Japanese, the A. sentences, which take an animate being as subject, are grammatical. (Strictly speaking, the subject is further specified as human or volitional. So \*The dog made the children take a detour, is unacceptable.)

The B. sentences, on the other hand, may be felt somewhat strange and awkward, as they take inanimate beings (cause or reason) as subjects. All of my Japanese informants pointed out the awkwardness of the inanimate subjects and changed the B. sentences to complex sentences with an adverbial clause or simple sentences with an adverbial phrase.

- (38) a. Taro ga okurimono o kaiwasure-ta koto ga  
Taro's forgetting to buy a present SM  
Hanako o kanasim-ase-ta.  
CM sad make Past tense P.

(Taro's forgetting to buy a present made Hanako sad.)

- a'. Taro ga okurimono o kaiwasure-ta node,  
SM a present CM forgot to buy as  
Hanako wa kanasin-da.  
P was sad

(As Taro forgot to buy a present, Hanako was sad.)

- b. Taro no syusse ga Hanako o yorokob-ase-ta.  
↓  
(Taro's success made Hanako happy.)

- b'. Taro ga syusse si-ta node (Taro no syusse ni),  
as Taro succeeded because of Taro's success

Hanako wa yorokon-da.  
Hanako was happy

c. teppoo no oto ga kodomotachi o issei ni hasir-ase-ta.  
 (The sound of the gun made the children run all at once.)

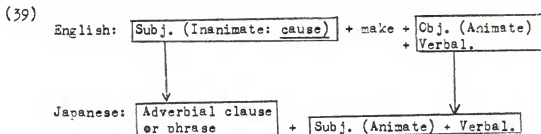
c'. teppoo no oto ga si-ta node (or teppoo no oto de),  
 as there was a sound of the gun because of the sound of the gun

kodomotachi wa issei ni hasit-ta.  
 the children ran all at once

d. sono hito no sonzai ga kodomotachi ni mawarimiti o s-ase-ta. (The present of the man made the children take a detour.)

d'. sono hito ga it-ta node, kodomotachi wa mawarimiti o shi-ta.  
 as the man stood there the children took a detour.

The correspondence between English causative sentences with inanimate subjects and Japanese sentences may be diagrammed as below.



This phenomenon—that an inanimate subject is not taken in a causative sentence—is widely observed in other types of Japanese transitive sentences. Let's examine these sentences.<sup>17</sup>

(40)

- a. The window overlooks the harbor.
- b. The house on the hill looks down on the woods of the park.
- c. The early seventeenth century saw the establishment of the present usage.



- d. The evening found us in the cold air.
- e. The year 1947 witnessed the publication of another book.
- f. A splash announced the kid's entry into the lake.
- g. A glance at the map showed Haruo and Makiko at what a strategic point Detroit was situated.
- h. A glance told him the novels were slop.
- i. A few steps brought them to a smaller restaurant.
- j. A short walk took us to K. S. U.
- k. A rough and ready analysis discloses here the presence of three distinct and fundamental concepts.
- l. A debate brought forth the question.
- m. A brief examination of his room showed him two other things.
- n. The removal of the cause may not now restore her.
- o. My experience leads me to believe it.
- p. Pain stung her into consciousness.
- q. His intimate acquaintance with horses and dogs has taught him how to deal with the untotured mind.
- r. Petroleum produces many products.
- s. Wine intoxicates men.
- t. The Bible says, "Love your neighbor."
- u. Then came the summer, and restlessness seized these young people.
- v. The date on her writing-table calender caught her eye.

As shown above, English transitive verbals can be syntactically flexible and take various inanimate elements as subjects: location like a. & b., time like c., d., e., & v., movement like f., g., h., i., j., k., l., m. & n., notion like o., p., q., & u., material like r., s., & t.

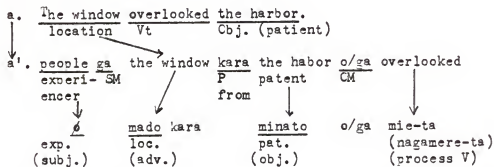
Japanese transitive verbals corresponding to these English ones are syntactically very selective on their subjects, and they can not take the above elements. The significant feature of the Japanese transitive verbal is that it can take only an animate being as its subject

Therefore, the direct translations of the above English sentences are rarely admitted and may be considered ungrammatical. They can be realized as grammatical Japanese sentences mainly by the ways just mentioned:

- (41) Use a transitive verbal which corresponds to the English one, but in doing so, an inanimate subject in English is replaced by an animate subject and the original becomes adverbial. (40) a., b., c., e., & r. are translated this way. Overlooks, looks down, saw and witnessed may be process or state verbals in their semantic deep.

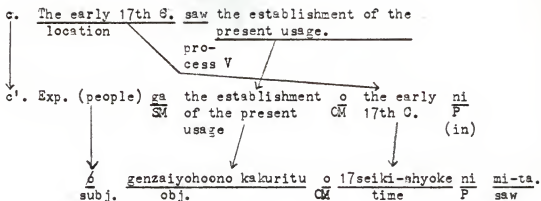
The animate subjects in Japanese can be called

Experiencer.

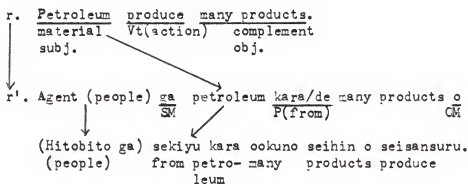


In Japanese, the subject does not appear, because it refers to general human (they, you, we). If the subject is a specific person, say, Taro, then the sentence is,

Taro ga mado kara minato o nagameta.  
(Taro viewed/looked at the harbor from the window.)

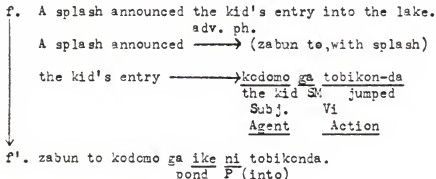


(people) saw the establishment of the present usage  
 in the early 17th C.



(42) Inanimate subjects of English transitive verbals  
 become adverbial clauses or phrases and various Japanese  
 intransitive or transitive verbals are used.

In case these intransitive or transitive verbals are  
 action V, or process/state V which contains NP as  
 experiencer, subjects are animate ones (either agent or  
 experiencer).



g. A glance at the map showed Haruo and Makiko (--S--).

A glance at the map  $\xrightarrow{\text{Adv. C}}$  sono tizu o hitome mite  
when (they) took a glance at  
the map

showed Haruo and  $\longrightarrow$  Haruo to Makiko wa  
Makiko (--S--)  $\xrightarrow{\text{Subj. (Exp.) P}}$   
(--S--) ga wakat-ta  
Obj. CM understood  
Vt  
process

g'. sono tizu o hitome mite, Haruo to Makiko wa  
(--S--) ga wakat-ta.

h. A glance told him the novels were slop.

A glance  $\xrightarrow{\text{Adv. Ph}}$  Hitomede  
at a glance

told him  $\longrightarrow$  kare wa (they were slop) ga  
they were slop he P Obj. CM  
Subj.  
Exp.

wakat-ta  
understood Vt process

h'. hitomede kare wa (the novels were slop) ga wakat-ta.

j. A short walk took us to K. S. U.

A short walk  $\xrightarrow{\text{Adv. C}}$  sukosi aruku to  
after (we) walked for a short time

took us to K. S. U.  $\longrightarrow$  watasitati wa K. S. U. ni  
we P P(at/to)  
Subj.  
Agent

tui-ta  
arrived  
Vi  
Action

j'. sukosi aruku to watasitati wa K. S. U. ni tui-ta.

1. A debate brought forth the question.

A debate <sup>adv. ph</sup> → tooron o toosi te  
through a debate

brought forth the question → sono mondai ga shooji-ta.  
the question <sup>SM</sup> arose  
Subj. Vi  
Patient process

1'. tooron o toosi te sono mondai ga shooji-ta.

o. My experience leads me to believe it.

My experience <sup>Adv. Ph</sup> → keiken o toosite  
through (my) experience

leads me to believe it → watasi wa sore o sinjiru yooninat-ta  
I p it <sup>GM</sup> believe come to  
come to believe it  
Subj. Vi  
Exp. process

o'. keiken o toosite watasi wa sore o sinjiru yooninat-ta.

(40) k., n., p., s., v., w. & x. may be dealt in a similar way.

(41) and (42) are the most frequently used ways to translate English transitive sentences containing inanimate subjects into acceptable Japanese. We can also translate some of them in other ways, though not frequently.

(43)

1. By passive sentences:

t. The Bible says, "Love your neighbor."

↓  
t'. Baiburu ni nanji no teke o aise yo to kakareteiru.  
("Love your neighbor" is written in The Bible.)

u. -----, restlessness siezed these young people.

↓  
u'. -----, ssinen tati wa otitukinonasa ni torituka-re-ta.  
these young P restlessness P sieze P P  
people by passive

(these young people were siezed by restlessness)

In Japanese passive sentences, a subject which is a patient or complement can be either animate or inanimate, and it does not seem to be severely restricted as in the active sentences.

2. By antonymous verbs:

q. His intimate acquaintance with horses and dogs has taught him how to deal with the untotured mind.

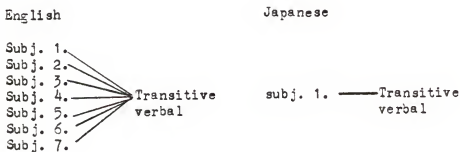
q'. kare wa how to deal with the untotured mind o  
he P Object  
Subj.  
Exp. intimate acquaintance with horses and dogs  
o toosite manan-da.  
through has learned.

By changing the verbal from 'teach' to 'learn' manabu, the Japanese sentence takes 'he', kare (animate: exp.) as a subject.

Now I will summarize what I have made clear so far in this section.

As I specified in (36), Japanese transitive verbals, including causatives, do not take inanimate subjects. The different syntactic behavior of English and Japanese transitive verbals is illustrated in (44).

(44)



- Subj. 1 ---- Animate (agent, experiencer, beneficiary)
- Subj. 2 ---- Inanimate (location)
- Subj. 3 ---- Inanimate (instrument)
- Subj. 4 ---- Inanimate (movement)
- Subj. 5 ---- Inanimate (time)
- Subj. 6 ---- Inanimate (notion)
- Subj. 7 ---- Inanimate (cause)

English transitive verbals can take any of the above subjects, but Japanese transitive verbals can not take any of them except Subj. 1. As a result, such elements as location, instrument, movement, time, ..notion, etc., which can be a subject in English, are mainly adverbial phrases or clauses in Japanese.<sup>18</sup> This difference, the syntactically flexible operation on subject-making in the English language and the extreme restraint on selecting subjects in the Japanese language, may yield the difference in discourse level in the form of ellipsis vs. non-ellipsis.

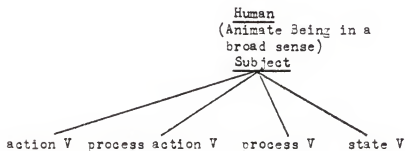
#### 5. Ellipsis and Japanese Verbals

The fact that Japanese transitive verbals do not take inanimate subjects, and that there are few verbals which can function both transitively and intransitively (or as process action V and process V) in the surface structure, leads me to the bold suggestion that the Japanese language directly reflects somewhat deeper cognitive processes.

Humans are the center of the universe. They act, perceive, and thus build their relationship to the outer world. This relationship between within and without is built through an active 'self', through action and perception.

The English sentence A brief examination of his room showed him two other things. does not reflect this cognitive process of human thinking directly. Through an action ( a brief examination), he arrived at a certain state (understanding of two other things). The Bible says, "Love your neighbor.", but the Bible can't say anything, as it doesn't have any organ to speak with. By a certain action or perception of the present or past (by reading it or hearing someone say so), we come to grasp the stative reality that "Love your neighbor" is (written) in the Bible. Human being is indeed the center, the active core in the cognitive process through his action or perception. The surface structure of the Japanese language seems to reflect this cognitive process by its trend to take a human element (or an animate being in a broad sense), the central core of activity or perception, as its subject. This can be roughly diagrammed as follows.

(45) Japanese surface structure:



As the subject position is taken by an animate element (Agent, Experiencer, Beneficiary), the other elements will be distributed to other positions in a surface structure. Various postpositional particles accompany them.



(46)

A. Action V.

- a.  $S(\underline{\text{agent}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{Vi}$       kare ga hasitte-iru.  
(he is running.)
- b.  $S(\underline{\text{agent}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + O(\underline{\text{ccomplement}} + \underline{\text{o}}) + \text{Vt.}$   
kare ga uta e utat-ta.  
he song sang  
(he sang a song)
- c.  $S(\underline{\text{agent}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{Adv.}(\underline{\text{ben}} + \underline{\text{ni}}) + C(\underline{\text{comp}} + \underline{\text{o}}) + \text{Vt}$   
kare ga watasi ni utta o utat-ta  
he I song sang  
(he sang a song for me)

B. Process Action V.

- a.  $S(\underline{\text{agent}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{Adv.}(\underline{\text{inst}} + \underline{\text{de}}) + C(\underline{\text{pat}} + \underline{\text{o}}) + \text{Vt.}$   
Tom ga kagi de mado o ake-ta.  
key window opened  
(Tom opened the window with a key)
- b.  $S(\underline{\text{agent}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{I.C}(\underline{\text{ben}} + \underline{\text{ni}}) + \text{D.C}(\underline{\text{pat}} + \underline{\text{o}}) + \text{Vt.}$   
Tom ga watasi ni hon o kure-ta  
I book gave  
(Tom gave me a book)

C. Process V.

- a.  $S(\underline{\text{exp/pat}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{Vi.}$   
Marx ga sin-da.  
(Marx died)
- b.  $S(\underline{\text{exp/pat}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + \text{Adv}(\underline{\text{time}} + \underline{\text{ni}}) + \text{Adv}(\underline{\text{loc}} + \underline{\text{de}}) + \text{Vi}$   
Marx ga 1867nen ni Igirisu de sin-da.  
England died  
(marx died in England in 1867)
- c.  $S(\underline{\text{exp}} + \underline{\text{ga}}) + C(\underline{\text{pat}} + \underline{\text{o}}) + \text{Vt.}$   
kare ga zoo e mi-ta.  
he elephant saw  
(he saw an elephant)

- d. S(exp + ga) + O(pat/comp + o) + Adv.(time + ni) +  
Adv.(loc + de) + Vt.

Blackthorne ga Edo-jidai ni Nihon de  
Edo era Japan

sono tatakai o mi-ta.  
that war saw

(Blackthorne saw that war in Japan in the  
Edo era)

- e. S(ben + ga) + Adv.(loc + de) + C(pat + o) + Vt.

Tom ga kooen de okane o otosi-ta.  
park money lost

(Tom lost money in the park)

#### D. State V.

- a. S(exp + ga) + Vi      wata<sup>1</sup>si ga samui.  
I cold  
(I am cold)

- b. S(exp + ga) + O(pat. + ga/o)<sup>19</sup> + Vt.

kare ga sake ga/o hosii.  
he sake want  
(he wants sake)

- c. S(exp + ga) + O(comp + ga/o) + Vt.

kare ga eigo ga/o sukida.  
he English like  
(he likes English)

- d. S(ben + ga/ni) + C(pat + o/ga) + Vt.

kare ga tiketto o mottei-ru  
he ticket have  
(he has a ticket)

kare ni ie ga a-ru.  
he house have  
(he has a house)

Vi. = intransitive verbal Vt. = transitive verbal  
 comp. = complement loc. = location  
 pat. = patient ben = beneficiary  
 exp = experiencer S = subject C = object  
 I.O = indirect object D.C = direct object

In the basic sentence patterns (46), we can observe the existence of canonical surface structures similar to the ones introduced by Hinds (refer to (16) ).

- (47)
- (I) NP ga ( + Animate) (NP ni) NP o VB (transitive)
  - (II) NP ga/ni ( + Animate) NP o/ga VB (transitive)
  - (III) NP ga ( + Animate) VB (transitive)

But the significant thing which differentiates these patterns from Hinds' is that the feature of the subjects (accompanied by ga or ni particles) is clearly defined as + Animate (agent, beneficiary, experiencer).<sup>20</sup>

As the result of this syntactic restriction on the subject in Japanese, the other elements which may occupy a subject position in English must take some other position.

(48)

<u>complement/patient</u>	—————	D.O position accompanied by <u>o/ga</u>
<u>beneficiary</u> when it occurs with <u>agent</u>	—————	I.O position or Adv. position accompanied by <u>ni</u>
<u>time, location instrument</u> etc.	—————	Adv. position accompanied by <u>ni, de</u> etc.

Ellipsis, as Hinds explained, can be traced by the format or the obligatory case frame. But it is because of Japanese verbals' tendency to take only animate subjects that the trace of ellipsis becomes possible. This fundamental feature of the Japanese verbal is no other than the real cause of the pervasive phenomenon of ellipsis in Japanese discourse.

To a given verbal the following formats can be clearly described.

(49)

Action V → { Subj. (I.O) (D.O)  
Agent ga (Comp o) (Ben ni) VB  
+ Animate + Animate }

Process Action V → { Subj. (I.O) D.O  
Agent ga (Ben ni) (Pat o) VB  
+ Animate + Animate }

Process V  
or  
State V → { Subj. (D.O)  
Ben/Exp ga/ni Pat/Comp o/ga VB  
+ Animate }

Process V  
or  
State V → { Subj.  
Pat ga VB  
+ Animate }

( ) indicates option element

The selective feature of the Japanese verbal on a subject is also clearly indicated by the two different morphological forms shown in

(34).

(34) can be rewritten as below.

(50) Process Action V  $\neq$  Process V in a morphological form

In the process action verbal, a subject is agent (+ Animate), but in the process verbal, it is patient ( $\pm$  Animate). The subject feature can be clearly specified by the two different morphological forms. This fact also supports the clear depiction of one format to a given verbal.

Now let's refer to ellipsis in terms of the Japanese verbal feature which has been specified as the real cause of ellipsis.

As shown in (49), postpositional particles like ga, o or ni are used as grammatical markers. In informal conversation, according to Martin (1976:50), o in Osaka (the second largest city next to Tokyo) may be dropped up to 91 percent of the time. The ellipsis of these particles shows that the grammatical functions of these particles, o as an object marker, ga as a subject marker and wa as various semantic markers are somewhat redundant in a surface structure. Thanks to the feature of Japanese verbals, the grammatical relation can be given by noun phrases themselves where no confusion occurs.<sup>21</sup> That is to say, a noun phrase which is animate, may be easily understood as a subject and another noun phrase which is not animate as an object by (49).

Martin's survey seems to indicate the interesting fact that the various rates of ellipsis of these particles reflect whether they have any other semantic role besides their grammatical function (like object or subject marker) in a surface structure. o as an object marker does not have any other semantic role and it is extremely redundant as a result. This fact is shown by its high rate of ellipsis, 91 percent.

Ga on the other hand is sometimes given the exhaustive-listing interpretation. If it is given that besides its grammatical function as a subject marker, ellipsis does not seem to occur.<sup>22</sup> This may be reflected in its rate, 60 percent. Ga is not always redundant like o in a surface structure.

Wa is used as thematic or contrastive. When it is used as thematic, it occurs with anaphoric or generic noun phrases. As Kuno (1972) explained, thematic wa is omitted with ease because its function is to indicate 'old information'. As anaphoric or generic noun phrases, mentioned and recorded in the registry of a given discourse, are old information by themselves, thematic wa is redundant. So wa which appears in a discourse is playing a contrastive role rather than a thematic one and it can occur with various elements which are contrasted in a discourse. Having a more substantive meaning than thematic wa, contrastive wa is, therefore, rarely omitted. The lowest rate, 36 percent seems to reflect this fact.<sup>23</sup>

Postpositional particles ellipsis, especially of ga and o, is closely related to the feature of the Japanese verbal in the sense that their grammatical relations are given directly by the Japanese verbal through its selective restraint on its subject.<sup>24</sup>

Nominal ellipsis, or ellipsis of noun phrases, in a discourse can be partially explained in terms of topicalization or thematization. But neither topicalization or thematization can be a real cause of nominal ellipsis. Why noun phrases are topicalized or thematized in the form of ellipsis in the Japanese discourse can not be answered by these processes above. To say that ellipsis is the result of topicalization is equal to saying that noun phrases can be topicalized as ellipsis as the result of topicalization.

This is why we have to differentiate two aspects of the pervasive phenomenon of ellipsis, namely the configuration of ellipsis and the cause of ellipsis. The former can be specified in terms of topicalization in a discourse level, and the latter by investigating the underlying structure of the Japanese sentence in the contrastive manner.

The nominal ellipsis also becomes possible by the selective feature of Japanese verbals on subjects and the resultant canonical surface structures. I do not mean noun phrase distribution with particle ga, o, and ni in a surface level but semantically fixed noun phrase distribution in a surface level, as shown in (49).

Roughly speaking, by the selective feature of Japanese verbals on subjects and the resultant canonical surface structures, noun phrases tend to be distributed to a fixed position according to their categorical features. And their frequent occurrence in fixed positions leads to their omission as easily traceable elements.

In English, a noun phrase which is established as a discourse entry is referred to by pronoun. In Japanese, as we have already seen in (15), there exists a similar operation. However, by the rigid syntactic feature of the Japanese language, ellipsis seems to play the main part in this matter.

As concerns verbal ellipsis, we can admit the similarity between English and Japanese.<sup>25</sup> The cause of this type of ellipsis is, therefore, can be investigated in a discourse level. In this sense verbal ellipsis should be differentiated from the particle and nominal ellipsis.

## 6. Miscellaneous

Finally, let's refer to some other aspects of Japanese verbals, which have something to do with ellipsis.

### 'Iru' vs. 'Aru'

In Japanese there are two existential verbals, i-ru and a-ru. I-ru calls for animate subjects and a-ru for inanimate subjects.<sup>26</sup>

For example,

(51)

- a. Hitosi to Marii wa Takamatu ni i-ru.  
                    Mary           in Takamatu  
(Hitoshi and Mary are in Takamatu.)
- b. hako wa teibulu ni a-ru.  
      box       on the table  
(The box is on the table.)

The existence of these two verbals shows the sensitivity of Japanese verbals toward (+ Animate) vs. (- Animate).

Let's examine these sentences.

(52)

- a. The table has a box under it.  
      old                   new
- b. The box is under the table.  
      old                   new
- a'. hako ga table no sita ni a-ru.  
      box       under the table
- b'. hako wa table no sita ni a-ru.

In English, except in the more marked kind of sentences, the subject of a sentence is a noun phrase which supplies old information while the object is a noun which supplies new information.<sup>27</sup>



In a., a patient, box is given an object position, and a location, table is given a subject position. By this the patient is specified as new information, and the location as old information. But in b., on the other hand, box (patient) becomes old information, and table (location) becomes new information because of the positions taken by them.

The particles, ga and wa are used for this matter, ga for new information, and wa for old information. A significant fact is that the matter of new and old information is handled (generally) by the grammatical positions (subj. vs. obj.) in English, and by the particles (ga vs. wa) in Japanese. This difference clearly shows that in English various elements can take a subject position when they convey old information, but that in Japanese they can not do so. In Japanese, Animate elements (agent, beneficiary, experiencer) and Inanimate elements (patient) are given the subject position. Location, instrument, time, etc. are prevented from becoming subjects. As a result, particles wa and ga are used for this matter.

#### Honorification

There are two kinds of honorification, Subject Honorification and Object Honorification. The rule of Subject Honorification attaches the discontinuous morpheme o----ni nar- to the infinitive form of a verbal, when the referent of the subject of a sentence is considered by the speaker as worthy of deference. Object Honorification attaches o----su- to the infinitive form of a verbal, when the object of a sentence is exalted. For instance,

(52) tazune-ru 'visit'

otazune ni nar-ru the subject is exalted.

otazune su-ru the object is exalted.

There are some verbals which have a different morphological honorific form like mai-ru (honorific form of yuk-u). By honorification, either a subject or an object is further specified as + exalted. In such a case, ellipsis may occur once those nouns (subject or object) are established as a discourse referent. Suppose a discourse where a teacher and a student appear. When otazunesu-ta is being used without noun phrases in it, we can easily understand that the student visited the teacher, because otazunesu-ta is the object honorific form of tazune-ru 'visit'.

## 7. Summary

I have attempted to explain why ellipsis is possible in Japanese and why it is not possible in English. The major points of this paper have been that (a) Japanese verbals prevent the occurrence of various elements as subjects except Agent, Beneficiary, Experiencer (these are + Animate) and Patient (+ Animate). (b) The process action verbal is different from the process verbal (related to the former by either a causative or deactivative operation) in its morphological form. (c) By (a) and (b), the single format, or the single canonical surface structure which is semantically specified, is given to a verbal and this is the real cause of ellipsis. (d) Particle ellipsis occurs because of its redundant grammatical function and Nominal ellipsis occurs because of the trend to fixed positions in a sentence. These two types of ellipsis are the result of the selective feature of Japanese verbals on a subject, as specified in (a) and (b). (e) Verbal ellipsis can be investigated in a discourse level as it is little related to the syntactic feature of Japanese verbals, and it does not reflect the syntactic difference between English and Japanese.

As shown in section 4., English is syntactically flexible on the selection of a subject. I can safely say that ellipsis is given to the Japanese language at the expense of this syntactic flexibility. This fact has been shown to a certain degree by translating English sentences into Japanese in that section. There we found that various inanimate subjects like time, location, movement, abstract notion, etc., in English are translated as either adverbial phrases or clauses.

## NOTES

1. Clavell 1975:528 (permission to quote has been requested from Atheneum Publishers). Some of the characteristics are incorrect. There are infinitives and all verbs are not regular. Masu is a sort of auxiliary, which adds politeness. Yukimasu can not mean could have gone. Mariko's suggestion to Blackthorne at the latter part of this page is very interesting. She says, "Anjin-san (Blackthorne), just change your concept of the world. Japanese is just learning a new art, detached from the world. .. It's all so simple." Mariko seems to notice the difference of the concept of the world (semantic world) between Japanese and English. I thank Dr. James L. Armagost for having advised me to read this novel and Hinds' paper. The Hinds (1978) article is preliminary in nature. I refer to some of his ideas set forth in it, as they are deeply related to my theme in ellipsis.

2. The term 'deletion' has been used widely by many linguists to refer to the omissions of various elements in the process of transformation. I will use it in this paper in the same way.

3. I owe this example to Kuno (1973:333-4), who explains these omissions as follows. Equi-NP Deletion is the transformation that deletes the subject of the constituent sentence under identity with the subject (or object) of the matrix sentence. Aux Deletion is a transformation that deletes the tense auxiliary of the constituent sentence when the constituent sentence is not followed by nominalizers such as koto 'that, the fact that' and no 'that, the fact that'. Constituent sentences of verbs such as re 'can', sase 'cause', rare 'be adversely affected', ta (i) 'want' undergo this transformation obligatorily. Ga/O Deletion is a very general transformation that deletes ga and o when they are followed by some other particle.

4. I owe these English examples to Lauri Karttunen (1976:368).  
I revised his examples for contrasting them with Japanese examples.

5. In Japanese the particles wa is used to mark the established element in a discourse. In this sense, both kare (he) and wa indicate that John is established as a discourse referent. But wa can be omitted from this sentence. kare ichi-dai mo mituke-rare-nakat-ta-yo. The particle wa may be understood as secondary since kare refers to John as an established element.

6. In Korean the same omission as in Japanese can be observed.

- a. John i piano rul chaji- riogo hat-ni.  
SM CM find try P.P I.P  
(Did John try to find a piano?)
- b. Ye, gurona (ku- nun) (kugo- sul) chaju-lsu unsot- da.  
Yes but he SM one CM find can not P.P  
(Yes, but (he) could not find (one).)
- c. John i piano dulu- riogo hat-ni.  
SM CM lift try P.P I.P  
(Did John try to lift a piano?)
- d. Ye, gurona (ku- nun) (kugo- sul) dulu-lsu unsot- da.  
yes but he SM it CM lift can not P.P  
(Yes, but (he) could not lift (it).)

SM -- Subject Marker, CM -- Object Marker,  
P.P -- Past tense Particle, I.P -- Interrogative Particle

English Korean Korean (complete form)

John → he ————— ∅ ————— ku (he)  
piano → one ————— ∅ ————— kugo (one)  
John → he ————— ∅ ————— ku (he)  
piano → it ————— ∅ ————— kugo (it)

In Korean there does not seem to be a clear distinction between it and one.

7. An asterisk (\*) means ungrammatical. I use it in a broad sense. I use it not only for syntactically ungrammatical sentences but also semantically unacceptable sentences.

8. Shibatani (1977:789-809) discusses the relationship between these surface cases (particles) and grammatical relations. He suggests the notion of SURFACE CASE CANON, which states acceptable case distributions. He describes that at the surface level, a non-embedded clause of Japanese may have more than one NCM NP (NP ga), but it requires at least one such NP. Optional ACC NP (NP o) and DAT NP (NP ni) have different restrictions; only one ACC NP is allowed, while more than one DAT NP may occur. Therefore the surface case canon that governs the case distribution of a surface non-embedded clause can be expressed in the following schema.

NCM(NP <u>ga</u> )	<sup>n</sup>	ACC(NP <u>o</u> )	<sup>1</sup>	DAT(NP <u>ni</u> )	<sup>n</sup>
	1		0		0

Hinds (1976-77), Kuroda (1978), and Okutsu (1967) have reached a similar notion. However, neither SURFACE CASE CANON nor CANONICAL SURFACE STRUCTURE PATTERNS deals with semantic distributions of Noun Phrases.

9. Chafe shows two other semantic configurations.

e. V	
state	
ambient	It's hot.

f. V	
action	
ambient	It's raining.

In Japanese, it is hot is	<u>soto ga atui.</u> subj. <sub>SM</sub> is hot outside is hot
---------------------------	--

it's raining is	<u>ame ga futte-i-ru.</u> subj. <sub>SM</sub> is falling rain
-----------------	---

Syntactically, we can not find any difference between a. & b. and e. & f. in Japanese, though it is difficult to call soto or ame patient or agent. I will regard e. & f. as peripheral.

10. Verbals like want, know, like or see, feel, learn, remember are further specified as experiential in addition to state or process. Chafe calls NP which appears as the subject of these verbals experiencer. Verbals like have, own, lose, find are further specified as benefactive in addition to state or process. NP which appears as the subject of these verbals is called beneficiary. Complement is equatable with Fillmore's "factitive case". In sentences like Mary sang a song, The children played a game, Tom ran a race and The infantry fought the war, song, game, race and war can be referred to as complement. This kind of noun specifies what it is that is created. I will use these terms to refer to various noun phrases below.

11. According to Chafe, whether a verbal is process action V (I) or (II) can be judged by a deprocessive derivation. This deprocessive derivation can be applied only to a verbal which is intrinsically an action-process (or process action (II) ).

process	
action	→ action
<u>root</u>	<u>root + deprocessive</u>

when process action root (verbal) is intrinsically action-process (or process action (II) ), this derivation is optionally possible.

Hence process action V (II) can be used without a patient noun.

- a. Roger is cutting.
- b. Roger is lifting.
- c. Roger is kicking.
- d. \*Roger is opening.
- e. \*Roger is breaking.

12. Chomsky (1972:25) treated these verbals in a similar way. He suggested that he grows corn is analyzable as he (+ cause) & S (corn grows).

13. Kill can not be used as a process V. The relationship between kill and die corresponds to that between koro-su and si-nu. Kill (vt.) vs. die (vi.) are rather exceptional as most process action verbals can be used as process V without changing their morphological form. Koro-su (kill) vs. si-nu (die) are also exceptional in the sense that this pair shows no morphological relation. Most causative-noncausative pairs involve suffixation of one kind or another, in Japanese.

14. In Korean the B sentences are ungrammatical like in Japanese. The C sentences are used instead of them, with the intransitive verbal forms.

	transitive form	intransitive form
cut	kun-ta	kunki-da
break	pusi-ta	pusioji-ta
kick	cha-da	chai-ta
drop	toroturi-da	toroti-da
kill	juki-ta	juk-da
bend	kupi-ta	kut-ta
mix	sok-ta	soki-ta
lift	oli-ta	olu-da

-ta and -da indicate present tense.

I thank Mr. Yang-Hoon Ko and Mrs. Hyein Ko for their kind assistance with information on the Korean language.

15. The following sentences are acceptable.

- a. kaisya ga kare o korosi-ta.  
 company SM he CM killed  
 (a/the company killed him.)
- b. sono kuruma ga kare o hii-ta.  
 the car SM he CM ran over  
 (the car ran over him.)

In these sentences, both kaisya and kuruma can be understood as agent. These nouns are inanimate, but they are personified as agent. Japanese



people tend to use passive sentences instead of a. and b.

a'. kare wa kaisya ni korosa-re- ta.  
he company by kill passive past tense marker  
(he was killed by a/the company.)

b'. kare wa sono kuruma ni hika-re- ta.  
he the car by run- passive  
over  
(he was run over by the car.)

16. I owe these examples to Masayoshi Shibatani (1976). He treats the B sentences as acceptable. But the acceptability of these sentences is far lower than that of the A sentences, and they are rarely used.

17. I owe most of these sentences to Tetsuya Kunihiro (1976). He investigated the differences between Japanese and English Nouns and Verbals in terms of 'meanings' and pointed out Japanese verbals' selective trend toward subjects.

18. According to Mr. and Mrs. Ko, the characteristics of Japanese transitive verbs, shown in this section ( (36)to (44) ), can be also admitted in Korean transitive verbs. Korean transitive verbs can not take inanimate subjects (location, instrument, time, notion, etc.). As a result inanimate elements are dealt as adverbial when English transitive sentences with them as subjects are translated into Korean.

19. Ga is used for marking the object of stative verbals. In Standard Japanese, o is ungrammatical. But in Kansai district (the western part of Japan), o is equally grammatical.

20. As concerns intransitive verbals, which are either stative or process, they can take both animate and inanimate beings as subjects. As they are stative or process, they take patient (+ Animate) and experiencer (+ Animate) as subject.

21. When two animate noun phrases appear in a surface structure, without ga as subject marker and o as object marker, a sentence becomes ambiguous. This is because a subject and an object can change their positions with each other. In such a case, one of these two particles becomes necessary.

a. Taro ga jiro o sikat-ta.  
           SM          CM scolded  
 (Taro scolded Jiro.)

b. Jiro o Taro ga sikat-ta.  
           CM          SM  
 (Taro scolded Jiro.)

c. Taro ga jiro o sikat-ta.  
           SM  
 (Taro scolded Jiro.)

d. Taro o Jiro o sikat-ta.  
           o          CM  
 (Taro scolded Jiro.)

e. \*Taro o Jiro o sikat-ta.

This sentence is ambiguous. It means both Taro scolded Jiro, and Jiro scolded Taro. And, therefore, it is unacceptable.

22. Sentence John ga kita is ambiguous. When ga is given the exhaustive listing interpretation, this sentence does not mean John came, but It was John who came. In this interpretation, ga can not be omitted. As shown above, the English cleft-sentence construction "It is X that ..." is similar to the Japanese exhaustive ga. In detail see Kuno (1973).

23. So 36 percent may be the rate of these ellipited thematic wa of the total number of the ellipited thematic wa and non-ellipited wa (both thematic and contrastive) in a given discourse.

24. By redundant, I do not mean grammatical functions of ga and o are secondary, but I mean grammatical relationships are specified doubly by these postpositional particles and the Japanese verbal through its

selective restraint on subject, and in informal conversation, the omission of these particle occurs when grammatical relationships are clearly specified by the latter.

25. Hinds (1972) clearly indicates the similarity between English and Japanese (P. 28-36). For example,

- a. Taro wa dokumanzyuu o tabesaserarekakete ita.  
Jiro wa nekoirazu o tabesaserarekakete ita.

Taro was about to be made to eat a poisoned cake.  
Jiro was to be made to eat rat poison.

- b. Taro wa dokumanzyuu o tabesaserarekakete ita.  
Jiro wa nekoirazu o datta.

Taro was about to be made to eat a poisoned cake,  
and Jiro rat poison.

Verbal ellipsis both in English and Japanese occurs contextually in discourse level as shown above. In general, it does not seem to be based on the Japanese verbal feature as nominal and particle ellipsis are.

26. In Korean, an existential verbal i-ta can take both animate and inanimate subjects. But keisi-ta, subject honorific form of i-ta, must take animate (+ Human) subjects.

27. See Chafe (1970:210-33).

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ELLIPSIS AND JAPANESE VERBALS

by

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This is an attempt to explain what causes ellipsis, through a contrastive study of English and Japanese. This paper deals with the relationship between ellipsis and some features of Japanese verbals, which English verbals do not have.

The major points of this paper are that (a) Japanese verbals prevent the occurrence of various elements as subjects, allowing only Agent, Beneficiary, Experiencer (these are + Animate) and Patient ( $\pm$  Animate). (b) The process action verbal is different from the process verbal (related to the former by either a causative or a deactivative operation) in its morphological form. (c) By (a) and (b), a single format, or a single canonical surface structure which is semantically specified, is given to a verbal, and this is the real cause of ellipsis. (d) Particle ellipsis occurs because of its redundant grammatical function and Nominal ellipsis occurs because of the trend to fixed positions in a sentence. These two types of ellipsis are the result of the selective features of Japanese verbals on a subject, as specified in (a) and (b).